

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08  
FRB-01 INR-10 NSAE-00 USIA-15 TRSE-00 XMB-04  
OPIC-06 SP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 ACDA-12  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-02 SS-15 SSM-05  
EUR-12 ARA-14 AF-10 AGRE-00 STR-07 /174 W  
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R 201200Z MAR 78  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9838  
INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA  
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI  
USUN NEW YORK 794

UNCLASPFLOMBO 1286

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PGOV,CE  
SUBJECT: STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER A.C.S. HAMEED

1. FOREIGN MINISTER HAMEED GAVE INTERVIEW ON FOREIGN POLICY TO SRI LANKA BROADCASTING COMPANY REPORTER.TEXT CARRIED IN MARCH 17 ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER DAILY MIRROR CONTAINED NO SURPRISES. IT EMPHASIZED SRI LANKA'S ORIENTATION TOWARD ECONOMIC POLICY.WHILE HAMEED MENTIONED MIDDLE EAST SITUATION,NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT,AND INDIAN OCEAN,OVER TWO-THIRDS OF INTERVIEW WAS DIRECTED TO ECONOMIC MATTERS.

2.TEXT OF HAMEED'S INTERVIEW FOLLOWS:. QUOTE: MR.A.C.S. HAMEED,FOREIGN MINISTER,SAID HE WAS TAKING STEPS TO CONVENE AN URGENT MEETING OF THE 25-MEMBER CO-ORDINATING BUREAU OF THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES ON THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON SOUTH LEBANON.

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3.HE WAS SPEAKING IN HIS CAPACITY AS SRI LANKA'S CHAIRMAN OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT.

4. SPEAKING ON THE INDIAN OCEAN ISSUE, MR. HAMEED SAID THAT SRI LANKA WAS FOR DEMILITARIZATION AND THE ELIMINATION OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY. BUT MR. HAMEED SOUNDED A NOTE OF

CAUTION, THAT AFTER DEMILITERIZATION AND THE ELIMINATION OF RIVALRY, ALL REGIONAL BORDERING STATES SHOULD ACT WITH A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND SHOULD NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE VACUUM THAT WOULD BE CREATED.

5. HE SAID THAT THERE WERE ECONOMIC GROUPINGS THE WORLD OVER, BARRING ASIA. HE CITED THE SOCIALIST BLOC, THE ECM, THE CARIBBEAN COMMON MARKET AND SAID THAT EVEN AN AFRICAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY WAS TAKING SHAPE. THOUGH ASIA TODAY PRODUCED 98 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S TEA, 90 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S RUBBER, AND 87 PERCENT OF THE WORLD'S COCONUT, THERE WAS NO TANGIBLE RETURN FOR IT BECAUSE THEY IN ASIA HAD NO ECONOMIC GROUPING.

6. WHEN THEY NEGOTIATED AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE TABLES, WORDS AND PHRASES HAD NO MEANING UNLESS THEY POSSESSED ECONOMIC MUSCLE.

7. MR. HAMEED SAID VERY SOON THE BEST MARKET IN THE WORLD WOULD BE THE MIDDLE EAST AND IN THIS CONTEXT SRI LANKA WAS IDEALLY SITUATED. IF THEY REMAINED STRICTLY NON-ALIGNED, ANY COUNTRY WOULD LIKE TO COME IN AND INVEST.

8. MR. HAMEED SAID THIS SLOGAN WOULD BE "SEE SRI LANKA AND SHOP" BECAUSE THE GOVERNMENT WAS INTENT ON OPENING

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THE BIGGEST TAX-FREE SHOP WINDOW IN SOUTH EAST ASIA. IT WAS THEN THAT THE FREE TRADE ZONE WOULD BECOME A LIVING REALITY.

9. IN CONCLUSION, MR. HAMEED SAID IT WAS THE INTENTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND HIS AIM TOO, TO MAKE FOREIGN POLICY AN ARM OF ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE. WHILE SRI LANKA WOULD BE ALIVE TO ALL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WORLD, AND WOULD CONTRIBUTE ITS MITE TO THE SETTLEMENT OF VARIOUS ISSUES AND PROBLEMS, HE WOULD SET OUT TO ENSURE THAT THEIR FOREIGN POLICY BECAME AN ARM OF ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE. END QUOTE.

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** NONALIGNED NATIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES  
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**TAGS:** PGOV, ECON, MOPS, CE, XF, (HAMEED, A C S)  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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